



Biewer Forest Management, LLC  
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December 10, 2018

To: Michigan House of Representatives Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

Re: Support for SB 396 S6

Biewer Lumber is a family owned company based in St. Clair Michigan. We operate two sawmills in Lake City and McBain Michigan and a treating and distribution facility in Lansing. We employ over 300 people in Michigan and are in the process of investing more than 40 million into our McBain Sawmill. As a purchaser of over 700,000 tons of logs annually, we are engaged with our County Road Commissions on a weekly basis. I feel we have strong working relationships with our local Road Commissions but the variations in policies are challenging when working in over 43 counties each year. Senate Bill 396 is a step in the right direction to streamline some of the differences between counties. Our sawmills are producing lumber year-round so having access to timber in late Winter and early Spring is essential to maintain steady inventories throughout this time period. The bonding of gravel and dirt roads section in SB 396 would open up many opportunities to harvest timber sales that are not currently accessible in all counties. We have worked with our local Counties for many years using this bonding process and have had great success. The timber industry's intention is not to damage our roads. We need these roads to move products and manage private, state and federal lands within these counties. I feel that our industry has done a good job educating the truckers and loggers on taking care of the roads they are using.

The key changes that are proposed in SB396 are not asking for the counties to do anything different than what many counties are already currently doing. We want to have a good relationship with the counties with open communication both ways. We as an industry tend to feel sometimes that if we are using a road that we are solely responsible for the maintenance and damage to that road even if the road was in poor condition prior to us hauling on it. These are things that we all need to work together on and keep pushing forward for change. Biewer Lumber is committed to doing business in Michigan and will continue to invest in our operations. The keys to success for the timber industry is timber availability and the movement of these products on a consistent year-round basis. SB 396 helps keep our products moving.

Sincerely,

Wes Windover  
Procurement Manager